DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 388 379 PS 023 398

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TITLE	Rate Surveys and Policies: Key Issues for Advocates.
INSTITUTION	Children's Defense Fund, Washington, D.C.
PUB DATE	Aug 94
NOTE	14p.; Companion document to "Promoting Access to Quality Child Care: Critical Steps in Conducting Market Rate Surveys and Establishing Rate Policies," see PS 023 399.
AVAILABLE FROM	Children's Defense Fund, 25 E Street, N.W., Washington, DC 20001 (provided together with PS 023 399).
PUB TYPE	Viewpoints (Opinion/Position Papers, Essays, etc.) (120)
EDRS PRICE	Document Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS	*Advocacy; *Community Surveys; *Day Care; Early Childhood Education; *Educational Policy; *Fees; Free Enterprise System; Government Role; Grants; State Government
IDENTIFIERS	*Child Care Costs; *Market Research; Reimbursement Programs

ABSTRACT

This paper discusses the role of child care providers, child care resource and referral (CCRR) agencies, community-based organizations, and other advocates in responding to market rate surveys of the cost of child care in their community. It focuses on how these groups can increase reimbursement rates and rate ceilings that are set by state and federal child care subsidy programs. The paper argues that advocacy groups need to become engaged in the market rate survey process in their communities and encourage day care providers to respond to the survey. Child care providers need to ensure that their rates and fee policies reflect market rate costs, taking into account private contributions, in-kind contributions, and sliding fee scales. When responding to surveys, providers need to read the survey instrument carefully and think critically about what they are being asked. The paper argues that CCRR agencies that become involved in conducting market rate surveys should ensure that data are collected in a consistent format by properly trained staff. (MDM)

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